

26a & 26b

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Summary

“I’m sorry.” The man sighs. He’s obviously embarrassed, but also sort of resigned. George guesses that flattening people into walls probably happens pretty often when he flies. “I usually try my best to book emergency exit seats but since it’s Christmas all the flights were completely booked. It’s a miracle I snagged this seat at all.”

“It’s okay,” George clears his throat. “I don’t mind.”

Or, the stranger that sits next to George on the plane is very tall, very awkward, and very hot.

Notes

hello!! i wrote this after a small dream being huge and squishing george by sitting next to him on a plane brainrot and now here we are. forgive me if there are typos, which if you have previously read any of my writing, know will inevitably be there. hope you enjoy :]

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

George keeps his head down when he steps onto the plane, quickly flashing his ticket to the flight attendant. Clutching his bag closer to his chest, he begins shuffling his way down the narrow aeroplane aisle.

When his mum had called him on the phone a mere few days ago, George had been expecting the usual. A quick update of how the family was going back home in London, his mother asking how he was doing all alone in Florida, and a few tearful “*I miss you so much, honey*”s. What he wasn’t expecting was for his mum to tell him she had bought him tickets for a flight home for Christmas. And for her to threaten that if he didn’t hop on that damn flight, she was going to donate his Harry Potter collection to the second-hand bookstore downtown.

It’s safe to say George didn’t argue. For more reason than just his affection for a book series he hasn’t touched in years, of course. While living in Florida is enjoyable and exciting, it’s been almost a year since he moved. In all that time he hasn’t been back to visit his family even once. He considers himself independent, but even he is bound to feel a little homesick after a year of being away from his family. He assures his mother that no donating of treasured childhood book series will have to occur, and he’ll make sure to catch the flight. It’s well past due time that he make the ten-hour flight back to London.

As George moves through the aisle, his eyes scan the seat numbers, looking for the same 26A that’s stamped on his ticket. Soon enough -after shuffling past far too many sweaty old men and screaming babies- he makes it, coming to a stop right beside row 26.

Standing on his tiptoes he opens the overhead baggage locker and slides in his carry on backpack, keeping his phone and headphones in hand. The locker shuts with a soft clack, and George flops down in his window seat, clicking together his seatbelt even though the plane is far from takeoff. Now all he has to do is sit and wait, and in a little over ten hours, he’ll be back home.

As more and more people filter onto the plane and the seats beside him remain empty, a small blossom of hope plants itself in George’s chest. He might, *just might*, have the row to himself for the entire flight. Sitting ten hours in a cramped space by yourself is annoying enough, but if George has to last that long with strangers trying to make conversation the whole time it will quickly go from semi-unbearable to literally wanting to hurl himself out of the emergency exit while the plane is mid-flight.

But just as he’s allowing himself to relax -an empty row seemingly in his blissful future- a small lady comes hobbling down the aisle. Though George bows his head in a silent prayer, she comes to a stop right in front of row 26. With a shaky hand, she raises her ticket and gives it a small wave.

“26C,” She croaks. “That’s me!”

George gives an awkward, tight-lipped smile as she plops herself down into the seat closest to the aisle, forcing himself to be polite. He’s being a little dramatic. There’s really nothing really wrong with a harmless old lady. But George can’t help but wish there was a little more than just one empty seat between them so he could block the stench of her suffocating perfume.

More and more people filter onto the plane until practically all the seats are full, and judging by the chatter among the flight attendants, it seems the plane is gearing up for take-off. George sighs in relief, letting his head fall sideways to rest on the curved wall, his eyes gazing out the small window. Finally.

But suddenly, outside on the tarmac, George sees a figure. It’s a man, clutching a single bag to his chest, and running towards the aeroplane like he’s been set on fire. George feels a little bad for him, but doesn’t bother to hide his snort when the man trips up the plane stairs.

But when the man finally makes it onto the plane -pushing frantically through the aisle while running a tired hand through his hair- he stops right in front of row 26. From where his ticket is peeking out of his fisted hand, George can make out a neat *26B* printed in black ink. George’s smile falls.

“Excuse me, Ma’am,” the man says to the lady in the aisle seat, leaning down slightly so she can hear him better. “May I get past to go to my seat?”

George shifts away as the man sinks into the middle seat, making sure not to touch him. Or well, he tries to. George hadn’t noticed it when he’d seen him desperately racing towards the plane, but the man is ridiculously tall. He’s all long limbs and broad shoulders, knees practically pulled up to his chest as he folds himself in half just to fit into the seat. George unfortunately gets caught in the crossfire, as due to the man’s large frame, he’s unintentionally pressing George into the curved wall of the aeroplane.

“I’m sorry.” The man sighs. He’s obviously embarrassed, but also sort of resigned. George guesses that flattening people into walls probably happens pretty often when he flies. “I usually try my best to book emergency exit seats but since it’s Christmas all the flights were completely booked. It’s a miracle I snagged this seat at all.”

“It’s okay,” George clears his throat. “I don’t mind.”

Strangely, he realises he's not lying. Normally this kind of physical contact with strangers would have him reeling, stomach churning in disgust as he tried to get as far away from people as possible. But with this man, for some reason, he feels no need to recoil.

"You going home?" The man asks, and George makes a small noise of confusion.

"Your accent." The man clarifies. "I just assumed..."

"Oh, yeah." George coughs. "Flying home to the family for Christmas. What about you?"

The man hums. "Just visiting a friend."

George's side burns where the man is pressed up against him, but weirdly it's a nice sort of burn. Just pure body heat radiating through the material of the man's grey sweatshirt. He's so close George can even *smell* him. Which should be gross, *would* be gross, but this stranger smells like sea salt, humidity and sage, and though it's unfamiliar and overwhelming, George can't deny it's a lot better than old lady perfume.

George turns away, suddenly embarrassed that he's inhaling this guy's scent like he's some sort of dog. "Must suck to fly when you're a giant."

"I'm not a giant." The man laughs and George feels his shoulders shaking against his own. "But yeah. Me and planes don't usually get along."

The man turns to him, and suddenly George is forced to take in the features of his face that he'd been trying so hard to ignore. A patchwork of tanned skin and constellations of light freckles, dark blond hair still tangled and windswept, amber eyes boring into George's own.

Fuck. George realises, throat running dry. *He's really hot.*

"I'm Dream," the man says with a smile, awkwardly wedging out his arm to offer his hand in greeting.

George blinks, slipping his hand into Dream's and giving it a light shake. Dream's skin is warm

underneath his fingertips. Why is this guy so damn warm?

“I’m George.”

“Nice to meet you, George.” Dream says with a smile, and George’s heart does struggles to continue its regular beating pattern. “Sorry that you had the misfortune of getting seated next to me.”

“Oh don’t worry.” George jokes, turning away to hide the pink flush in his cheeks. “I’ll be counting down the hours till we land.”

Sitting next to Dream actually isn’t all that bad. Apart from being pressed shoulder-to-shoulder against his side and having his feet awkwardly knock against the other man’s every five minutes, George finds Dream a fairly decent seatmate. He doesn’t at all try to force George into small talk, except to ask him if he wants salted cashews when the flight attendant comes by. George almost feels bad, like he should be forcing himself to make conversation. A part of him even *wants* to, which has his introverted self recoiling in disgust. But in the end, he stays silent, resolving to simply lose himself in his music as he leans his head against the aeroplane wall and tries to ignore the electricity sparking across his skin where Dream’s arm is touching his own.

The hours pass by surprisingly quickly, music dismantling time as the view below changes from patchwork houses to wide fields to the vast blueness of the Atlantic ocean. Soon the sky starts to darken, and George’s eyelids begin to flutter. He fights to stay awake, but his eyelids grow heavier and heavier, and the warmth radiating from beside him is making it really damn hard not to melt into the comfort of unconsciousness.

He doesn’t notice when his eyes finally slide shut, nor does it register when his head lolls, coming to rest on a warm shoulder. But he isn’t pushed away. Instead, George is allowed to fall deeper asleep, bringing up a hand to tug a warm arm closer towards him as he absorbs the heat and comfort of the man beside him.

The noises filter back in slowly, George’s eyelashes fluttering as the fuzzy world pieces itself back into existence. His back is aching, a crooked mess courtesy of sleeping upright in a shitty aeroplane

seat. There's also a weird crick in his neck, the side of his face warm from the hard object he's resting on.

The object shifts.

George bolts upright, suddenly wide awake as his gaze locks onto the man still soundly sleeping beside him. Dream is folded almost in half, head cocked back resting against the back of his seat. His eyes are still closed, lips parted slightly as he breathes in and out slowly. On his right shoulder where his sweatshirt is slightly crumpled, a small patch of grey material is darkened by drool.

George blinks as it dawns on him.

Before he can make any sort of rash decision (leap over Dream and make a run for it), a flight attendant comes gliding down the aisle.

"Excuse me, Sir," she says, hands clasped together as she gives him a bright, lip-stick painted smile. "I'm going to have to ask you two to grab your stuff and leave, as the plane has landed."

"Yeah." George rushes out. "I'm sorry, we- we fell asleep."

The flight attendant laughs, eyes flicking to Dream's sleeping form still snoring away. "I can see that."

The tips of George's ears burn bright red and he gives Dream a hard shove. "*Dream.*"

Dream jolts as he wakes, choking on his spit as he gazes around blearily. "Wha-what? Where am I?"

"On the plane, doofus," George says exasperatedly. "We're in England."

Dream blinks a few times before the memories seem to flood back in. "Oh right. Flight. England." He frowns as he rubs the sleep crusted around his eyes. "Did I really sleep for the whole flight?"

“Both of you did.” The flight attendant chimes in and Dream’s eyes flick to her, noticing her presence for the first time. “Might I say you two looked quite adorable sleeping against each other like that.”

Dream’s head whips around to look at George in confusion, but the Brit can do nothing but turn his face away in embarrassment.

“R-Right.”

“You slept soundly for almost the whole flight,” The flight attendant continues with a gentle smile. “If you don’t mind me asking, how long have you two been together?”

At that George’s head snaps back up in disbelief. She thinks they’re *together*? They literally just met ten hours ago right here in these damn seats and they're being mistaken for a couple.

Yeah, George’s brain supplies. S he saw you drooling on this guy’s shoulder so can you really blame her?

Dream seems just as taken aback, and George’s face heats with embarrassment. But then Dream speaks, and the embarrassment gives away to pure shock.

“Five months.” Dream says without blinking an eye. George's eyes snap to him, absolutely bewildered. “We’re travelling back to England together so I can meet his parents.”

“Oh how nice.”

“Yeah,” Dream says with a smile. “Really excited to meet them. If they had a son as lovely as him I’m sure they’re great.”

George just stares at him slack-jawed and being able to do anything but blink. *What the fuck?*

“You’re just so sweet.” The flight attendant gushes, clapping her hands together. “I wish I could hear more, really, but I do have to ask you two to gather together your stuff and leave the plane. You’ve been sitting here cuddling for almost ten minutes since the flight landed!”

George blinks once more. *Cuddling?* A foggy memory of his own hand curling itself a warm bicep comes to mind and he violently shakes his head to get rid of it.

“So sorry about that Ma’am,” Dream says, unbuckling his seatbelt to rise from his seat. Even though he doesn't fully straighten, his blonde waves still brush the roof of the plane. He turns his head to look down at George. “C’mon George. We better be going.”

The flight attendant leaves them to gather their stuff, and then awkwardly shuffle down the cramped aisle until they’re finally stepping off the plane onto English soil. Once they make it inside the airport, they loiter by each other in silence

“What the hell was-”

“That was weird I'm-”

George coughs. “You first.”

“I uh, sorry about that whole thing,” Dream says quietly, bringing up a hand to scratch at the back of his neck. “Thought it’d be easier to lie than trying to... I don’t know.”

“It’s-it’s fine.” George stammers, eyes once again flicking to the dark spot on Dream’s shoulder. He flushes crimson. “Sorry about your sweatshirt.”

“What?” Dream says, turning to look. Once he sees, he too flushes pink. “Oh uh, don’t- don’t worry about it. Glad I could help you sleep... I guess.”

“Yeah,” George says, averting his eyes to the smooth linoleum floor, shifting his weight from foot to foot. This is the most awkward interaction he’s ever had with anyone in his life. Fuck seeing his family after a year, he just wishes the earth would open up and swallow him right here and now. “So uh... bye?”

“Oh uh...yeah.” Dream murmurs, hitching his bag further up his shoulder. “Bye.”

With that Dream turns, striding away into the crowd. The crown of his golden hair remains visible amongst the bustling swathes of people even as he walks further and further away. Curse his ridiculous height.

When the blond head of hair finally disappears, George turns. He has a family to visit. He should forget about Dream and enjoy being home for the first time in a year.

He doesn't forget about Dream exactly, but as George reunites with his family after almost a year, other things take priority over the tall American boy he sat next to (and drooled on) on the plane. Christmas dinner is wonderful, as are the Christmas presents he receives. Socks, homemade chocolate chip cookies, and a sweater that his older sister knitted him. It's downright horrid, but as soon as he pulled it from the scraps of waxy wrapping paper George immediately fell in love.

It's as he's helping his mother clean away the dishes with a soft smile on his face and a happy heart that he gets the text.

Wilbur: *hey george heard you were back in london! would you maybe wanna come round tomorrow night and hang with me and some friends to catch up?*

Wilbur: *i also happened to have a friend come over from america and i think it would be really cool for you to meet him*

George smiles down at his phone. He's not really one to enjoy parties and social gatherings at all, but Wilbur is a close friend, and since his move to Florida he hasn't seen him in almost a year.

Sure. He sends back. *Would be great to catch up. Looking forward to meeting the new guy :]*

Awesome! He receives back only a few minutes later. *I'm sure you'll love him.*

Less than twenty-four hours later, George is standing in front of Wilbur's door wearing his sister's

knitted sweater, and a thick fur rimmed coat to fight off the chill. It's snowing lightly, and George's breath turns into puffs of fog in front of his face. When he tugs off a glove to give Wilbur's door a quick knock, his fingers are bright pink.

When the door opens, George's mouth turns up into a smile, ready to greet his old friend.

But Wilbur isn't the one standing in the doorway.

Standing in the doorframe, towering over him in all his six foot three, unbridled blonde glory, is none other than the man from the plane.

"You- what." George supplies, brain short-circuiting. He tips his head up, squinting to examine familiar features. " *Dream?*"

Dream looks just as bewildered as him, jaw slack as he stands there blinking at George with wide eyes.

"Nice... sweater?"

George opens his mouth to respond - probably with something like *why the fuck are you standing in the door of my friend's house-* but before he can get the first words out, Wilbur pops his head out the side of the door.

"George!"

Wilbur tumbles out of the house to envelop George in a crushing hug, pulling away with a smile. "It's so nice to see you man!"

George blinks, looking at Wilbur, and then back at Dream still standing dazed in the doorway.

"Oh!" Wilbur says, practically dislocating George's arm as he tugs him over to Dream. "This is my mate Dream. Flew in from Florida -"

"Four days ago." George finishes, brown eyes meeting amber.

Wilbur cocks his head to the side. "Yeah. How'd you know that though?"

George opens his mouth to answer, but before he can, Dream cuts in.

"Guess it's five months and four days now."

George frowns for a moment in confusion, before the comment registers. He scoffs, light laughter bubbling up in his chest and Dream smiles softly before he is soon laughing right along with him, broad shoulders shaking in amusement.

"Uh Dream," Wilbur says, gaze flicking forth between the two of them. "Do you already know George?"

Dream and George lock eyes before dissolving into more incredulous laughter. Both of them are bent over double, clutching their stomachs as Wilbur stands there extremely confused. When George straightens up, wiping tears from his eyes and face aching from smiling so hard, he sees that Dream is in much the same state.

"No, I don't." Dream says finally, eyes creased with soft smile lines. Time seems to slow when they lock eyes, small snowflakes falling to the pavement all around them.

"Okay..." Wilbur says, still looking unconvinced. "Come inside George. It's freezing."

"Yes it is," George agrees, "Please, inside."

Wilbur steps past Dream back into the warmth of the house and down the hall, and George is quick to follow. But while passing through the doorway, he stops, head tipping up towards Dream.

"You don't know me, huh?" George says with a small smile. Dream returns it with one of his own.

"I don't." He says. "Not really."

They stand there, in the doorway of Wilbur's house, the commotion of their other friend's beckoning them from down the hall.

"I don't know you." Dream says, the warmth of his amber eyes heating George from the inside out.
"But I certainly think I want to."

End Notes

ty for reading!

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